

God's Delays are not God's Denials, Part 2 - Acts 25:3-5 – March 14th, 2010

- This is part two of a series titled; "God's Delays are not God's Denials." The Apostle Paul will rise from our text and attest to this truth.
- Paul has been in custody for two years now, and despite the delay in Caesarea, and the denial of justice, it's all providentially perfect.
- If you were to put a caption on these last four chapters of this amazing book of Acts, it would have to be; "God's Perfect Providence."

"We can see that Paul's generous "imprisonment" in Caesarea was actually a providential provision of protective custody against the murderous intentions of the Jews, as well as a "forced rest" in light of his unfailing missionary service in years past, and great tasks in the years ahead."

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- With this in mind, what can we learn from the life of Paul as it relates to God's delays not being misinterpreted as God's denials?

1. Man's way can't deny God's way (Verses 1-2)

- The chief priests and Jewish leaders present their false charges against Paul to Festus as the new Governor of Caesarea province.
- As we'll see next in verse three, they try to persuade Festus to see it their way because they have made an oath to rid the earth of Paul.
- Be that as it may, the Lord has already told Paul the way it's going to go, and as he had testified in Jerusalem, he will testify in Rome.
- Suffice it to say, that regardless of how many people get in the way and try to delay God will still have His way and the Apostle knows it!

2. Man's plans can't deny God's plans (Verse 3)

3 They urgently requested Festus, as a favor to them, to have Paul transferred to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way.

- v3 Paul's accusers plead with Festus to do them a favor and have Paul brought back to Jerusalem, as secretly, they planned to kill him.
- Ultimate failure will be met with this plan because this is not the plan for this, God's man. I'm not trying to be clever I'm trying to be true.
- In other words, man can make all the plans his wicked and deceitful little heart desires but its God who will have the final word, not man.

Proverbs 16:1 To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the reply of the tongue. NIV

Proverbs 12:5 The plans of the righteous are just, but the advice of the wicked is deceitful. NIV

Proverbs 16:9 In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps. NIV

Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails. NIV

3. Man's injustice can't deny God's justice (Verses 4-5)

4 Festus answered, "Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon. 5 Let some of your leaders come with me and press charges against the man there, if he has done anything wrong."

- v4 Festus responds to their plea to bring Paul back to Jerusalem by telling them that Paul is in Caesarea and that's where he's going.
- v5 Festus tells them that, "if Paul has done anything wrong," then some of your leaders can go back with him and press charges there.
- Forgive my raw remarks here, but this is just stupid. Paul has not done anything wrong! He is just, and they are unjust as unjust can be.
- Fortunately for us, Paul, unlike me, doesn't see this in that way. Why; because he has committed this injustice to the justice of his Lord.

Psalm 37:5-7 5 Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: 6 He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun. 7 Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. NIV